



G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery VA Medical Center

*to care for him who shall have borne the battle and his widow, and orphan*

# FOCUSED ON YOU

## Happy New Year!

JANUARY 2020

Live Whole Health.

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration

### VA Celebrates Patient Centered Care with “*Discover What Matters*” video



[va.gov/wholehealth](http://va.gov/wholehealth) • Click here to learn more!

As VA medical centers and clinics across the country help Veterans to Live Whole Health, the stories of the positive impacts are piling up. You can [read many of these stories](#) at [VA.gov/WholeHealth](http://VA.gov/WholeHealth) and learn how they inspired the “[Discover What Matters](#)” video. This new site is designed to help users quickly find the Whole Health information they need on available classes, personal health planning, Well-being Programs, as well as videos, apps, and articles.

Whole Health is about more than just an illness or a symptom a Veteran may have. This patient centered approach considers the full range of physical, emotional, mental, social, spiritual, and environmental factors that can influence a person’s health. Veterans set goals based on what matters most to them. Those priorities

drive the health planning decisions they make with their care team.

In addition to clinical care, Veteran health plans may include Well-being Programs that enhance their self-care. From physical and creative activities to mindfulness meditation or complementary approaches such as yoga and acupuncture, Veterans choose the combination of care that helps them achieve what is important to them. *Take the time to Discover What Matters to You.* #LiveWholeHealth.

*The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is focusing on how its Whole Health approach is helping Veterans “Discover What Matters” and empowering them to consider both their health and well-being in a new video.*

The New Year offers new opportunities to improve your health and well-being. To begin your Whole Health journey, attend one of our Introductory Classes on the 1st and 4th Thursdays of the month from 1-3 p.m. Classes are held in room L-303A on the 3rd floor. For more information, contact Randy Boyd at 601-362-4471, extension 56014.

## Be Involved in Your Health Care Healthy Living Message

### What's Important to Know?

You can play an active role when you visit with your health care team. To get the most out of your visit, plan the questions you want to ask and the things you want to discuss, and be sure to leave the visit with information about your care. Here are some specific ways to be more involved in your health care and get the most out of your next visit:

#### Before your visit:

- Write down your health questions and concerns
- Make a list of all the medications you take, including vitamins and supplements to bring to the visit
- Get additional information from the Veterans Health Library and My HealtheVet

#### During your visit:

- Bring a family member to help you remember what you and your team discuss
- Share your health questions, problems, and concerns with your team at the beginning of your visit
- Tell your team about your past illnesses/ hospitalizations, medications, and any problems you may be experiencing
- Tell your team about your needs and preferences for treatment and your health
- Work with your team to create a treatment plan that meets your needs and be involved in making decisions about your care
- Know your medications and why you take them, and ask for written instructions and information to take home with you
- Ask your team to clarify anything that's confusing, and speak up if you have concerns or think something is wrong
- Ask when and how you will get test results and additional treatments

#### After your visit:

- Get additional information from the Veterans Health Library and My HealtheVet

Tell your team if you have problems following your care plan, or if there is a change in your conditions or health (Continued on page 4)

## January is National Blood Donor Month



### A New Year, A New Day, A New Chance to Save Lives

January 9, 2020, from 12-5 p.m.  
in Montgomery Hall

G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery VA Medical Center  
1500 East Woodrow Wilson Avenue  
Jackson, MS 39042

Donors will receive a Mississippi Blood Services  
t-shirt and a \$5 Wendy's gift card

*MBS suggests that all donors eat at least four hours  
within giving blood and drink plenty of fluids prior to  
and after making a donation.*

# Expanding Access to Military Commissaries, Exchanges and Recreation Facilities (MWR)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

**Q.** Who is eligible for DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges starting on January 1, 2020?

**A.** Veterans who meet other than non-caregiver criteria are:

- Purple Heart recipients
- Former Prisoners of War (POW)
- Veterans with 0-90% Service-Connected disability ratings
- Medal of Honor recipients and Veterans with 100% Service-Connected disability ratings who are already eligible under existing DoD policy

Caregivers who meet the criteria are:

- Individuals approved and designated as the primary family caregiver of an eligible Veteran under the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers beginning on January 1, 2020, will be eligible for these privileges.
- For information about primary family caregivers, visit <https://www.caregiver.va.gov/>.

**Q.** Are DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges available to caregivers enrolled in the Program of General Caregiver Support Services?

**A.** No. Only the primary family caregiver of an eligible Veteran in VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers may use this benefit. Veterans may meet eligibility for DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges under other non-caregiver criteria.

**Q.** Are DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges available to secondary caregivers in the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers?

**A.** No. An authorized caregiver must be the individual approved and designated as the primary family caregiver of an eligible Veteran under VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. Veterans may meet eligibility for DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges under other non-caregiver criteria.

**Q.** What is the definition of a primary family caregiver, as mentioned above?

**A.** The primary family caregiver is an individual designated as "primary provider of personal care services" for the eligible Veteran who has been approved for the VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

**Q.** When should primary caregivers expect to receive their eligibility letters in the mail?

**A.** Letters for DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges will be printed and mailed in the month of December for eligible primary caregivers enrolled in the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

**Q.** Are Veterans who are from eras prior to Post-9/11 eligible to apply for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers now, if they are eligible for the DoD Expanded Access MWR privileges, under other non-caregiver criteria?

**A.** VA is currently accepting applications for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers from Post-9/11 era Veterans only. The first phase of expansion of this program will occur when the VA Secretary has certified the new caregiver information technology system is fully implemented and final regulations are published. VA will begin expanding eligibility for this program Summer of 2020.

**Q.** Is the MISSION Act of 2018 and the Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018 the same thing and/or are they connected in any way?

**A.** No. The MISSION Act of 2018 is being implemented by the Department of Veterans Affairs. The Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018 is a DoD program. Please see <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/products#!/detail/780>, for more information related to the Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018 or call 1-800-342-9647 (Toll Free 24/7).

**Q.** What services does VA offer for all caregivers of enrolled Veterans?

**A.** Caregivers are eligible for a host of VA services through the Program of General Caregiver Support Services. These services are available to caregivers of eligible Veterans of any era. The Program of General Caregiver Support Services includes training, education, respite care, a telephone support line, peer-support mentoring, self-care courses and other services. For information about the Program of General Caregiver Support Services visit <https://www.caregiver.va.gov/>.

## Be Involved in Your Health Care (Continued from page 2)

### Want to Know More?

If you want to learn more about how to be involved in your health care, talk with your VA health care team. They can also help if you have questions about or interest in making a healthy living change. For more information go to: [https://www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy\\_Living/Be\\_Involved\\_in\\_Your\\_Health\\_Care.asp](https://www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Be_Involved_in_Your_Health_Care.asp)

### Resources

- [VHA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention](#)
- [Veterans Health Library](#)
- [My HealtheVet](#)
- Healthfinder — [Quick Guide to Healthy Living, Take Charge of Your Health](#)
- [Ask Me Three](#) – Good Questions for Your Good Health



**Healthy Living Matters.  
Prevention Works.**

*Flu vaccinations will be  
offered every Wednesday  
January 8—March 25  
from 8:30 a.m.—Noon  
in the Atrium*

## Beneficiary Travel

The Beneficiary Travel program provides eligible Veterans and other beneficiaries mileage reimbursement, common carrier (plane, train, bus, taxi, light rail etc.), or when medically indicated, "special mode" (ambulance, wheelchair van) transport for travel to and from VA health care, or VA authorized non-VA health care for which the Veteran is eligible.

### Beneficiary Travel Benefits

A Veteran may be eligible for Beneficiary travel services if the following criteria are met:

You Qualify if:	You Qualify for Special Mode Transportation (Ambulance, Wheelchair Van, etc.) if:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You have a service-connected (SC) rating of 30 percent or more, or</li><li>• You are traveling for treatment of a SC condition, or</li><li>• You receive a VA pension, or your income does not exceed the maximum annual VA pension rate, or</li><li>• You are traveling for a scheduled compensation or pension exam</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You meet one of the eligibility criteria in the left column, and</li><li>• Your medical condition requires an ambulance or a specially equipped van as determined by a VA clinician, and</li><li>• The travel is pre-authorized (authorization is not required for emergencies if a delay would be hazardous to life or health)</li></ul>

For more information about eligibility visit [Health Benefits—Beneficiary Travel](#)

The U.S. Treasury requires electronic Federal benefit payments. If you have not signed up for electronic payments you will need to complete the [VA-FSC Vendor File Request Form](#) and turn it in to the Agent Cashier. If you do not have a bank account, you may request the Direct Express Card option. For more information about electronic payments, contact (601) 362-4471, extension 51431.

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**Choose VA**